

Message Text

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SUBJECT: JANUARY 20 PRESS ROUNDUP

LONDON FOR AMB/EX

1. MURREY MARDER OF WASHINGTON POST, IN REPORTAGE ON
PRESIDENT CARTER'S STATE OF UNION ADDRESS, OBSERVED THAT
"IN HIS OUTLOOK ON WORLD AFTER YEAR OF GRAPPLING WITH ITS
HARSH REALITIES, PRESIDENT CARTER LAST NIGHT GAVE CONGRESS
SOBER ACCOUNTING, CLAIMING PROGRESS FOR HIS POLICIES, BUT
RECOGNIZING NO EASY ROADS AHEAD." MARDER POINTED OUT:
"PRESIDENT LAST NIGHT USED UNUSUALLY RESTRAINED LANGUAGE IN
HIS FORECAST ON COMPLETING CENTERPIECE OF AMERICAN-SOVIET
NEGOTIATIONS, NEW NUCLEAR STRATEGIC ARMS LIMITATION TALKS
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ACCORD. IN FALL, CARTER SPOKE OF AN AGREEMENT 'WITHIN
SIGHT.' LAST MONTH, CHIEF U.S. NEGOTIATOR PAUL WARNKE SAID
IF PRESENT RATE OF PROGRESS IN NEGOTIATIONS IS MAINTAINED,
AN AGREEMENT COULD BE REACHED 'IN NEXT THREE MONTHS.' BUT
CARTER, WHO RECENTLY SAID 'I THINK MY BIGGEST MISTAKE HAS
BEEN IN INADVERTENTLY BUILDING UP EXPECTATIONS TOO HIGH,'
LAST NIGHT EMPLOYED HIS MOST GUARDED PREDICTION. IT WAS:

'IF TALKS RESULT IN AN AGREEMENT THIS YEAR--AND I TRUST THEY WILL,' ACCORD WILL ENHANCE WORLD STABILITY AND AMERICAN SECURITY. CARTER SAID NEGOTIATIONS 'HAVE BEEN DIFFICULT AND PROLONGED' BECAUSE OF HIS ADMINISTRATION'S DETERMINATION 'TO REDUCE, NOT JUST CONTAIN,' BOTH NUMBERS OF AMERICAN-SOVIET NUCLEAR STRATEGIC WEAPONS AND QUALITATIVE IMPROVEMENTS IN THEM. PRESIDENT ALSO LISTED PROGRESS IN OTHER AREAS OF NEGOTIATIONS WITH SOVIET UNION, INCLUDING GOAL OF TOTAL BAN ON ALL NUCLEAR WEAPONS TESTS. HE ALSO SAID 'WE HAVE DECIDED TO CUT DOWN OUR ARMS TRANSFERS ABROAD,' IN WHICH U.S. EMBARRASSEDLY STANDS AS WORLD'S 'PRINCIPAL ARMS MERCHANT.'"

2. CHARLES W. CORDDRY OF BALTIMORE SUN REPORTED THAT PENTAGON WILL CONDUCT INTENSIVE TESTS OF CRUISE MISSILES AGAINST FULL RANGE OF U.S. AIR DEFENSE WEAPONS IN ORDER TO INSURE THAT THESE NEW STRATEGIC ARMS CAN PENETRATE SOVIET DEFENSES IN 1980'S. CORDDRY REPORTED: "SPEAKING FOR PENTAGON BUT BARRING QUOTATION BY NAME, DEFENSE OFFICIAL SAID IT WILL BE POSSIBLE, IN TESTING PROTOTYPE CRUISE MISSILES, TO MOUNT IN MICROCOSM AS FORMIDABLE DEFENSE AS RUSSIANS ARE LIKELY TO HAVE IN NEXT DECADE. TWO MILLION DOLLAR TOMAHAWK TEST MISSILES WILL BE FLOWN AGAINST FIVE TYPES OF U.S. GROUND-BASED AIR DEFENSE MISSILES AND TWO TYPES LAUNCHED FROM JET FIGHTERS. THERE ALSO WERE INDICATIONS THAT CAPTURED RUSSIAN SURFACE-TO-UNCLASSIFIED

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AIR MISSILES MIGHT BE USED IN TESTS. OFFICIAL SAID THAT WOULD SEEM LIKE SMART THING TO DO, BUT OTHERWISE DECLINED COMMENT. UNUSUALLY TOUGH TESTS, DESIGNED TO FINE-TUNE FINAL DESIGN OF PRODUCTION MISSILES, ARE TO INVOLVE FIVE CRUISE MISSILE FLIGHTS AGAINST INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT DEFENSES FROM NOW UNTIL JUNE...OFFICIAL SAID THERE IS NO EXPERIENCE IN USING CRUISE MISSILES AGAINST AIR DEFENSES, BUT HE EXPECTED TESTS TO VERIFY COMPUTER SIMULATIONS SHOWING THAT DEFENSE ALMOST DEFIES SOLUTION. HE SAID HE COULD NOT CONCEIVE OF TESTS SHOWING THAT CRUISE MISSILES ARE TOO VULNERABLE FOR HEAVY IMPORTANCE U.S. HAS PLACED ON THEM."

3. CHARLES W. YOST, FORMER AMBASSADOR TO U.N., WRITING IN CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR, SAID "ANY ACCEPTABLE SALT AGREEMENT WILL BE BASED ON AN 'ASSURED DESTRUCTION' DETERRENT ON BOTH SIDES." HE SAID AS LONG AS TWO SUPERPOWERS REMAIN AS HEAVILY ARMED WITH NUCLEAR WEAPONS "AND AS PROFOUNDLY MISTRUSTFUL OF EACH OTHER AS THEY ARE NOW, NUCLEAR WAR COMMENCING BY ACCIDENT OR BY GRADUAL ESCALATION OF CONVENTIONAL OR POLITICAL CONFLICT IS ENTIRELY POSSIBLE...OTHER GENUINE 'PRESENT DANGER' IS RISK THAT

SALT TWO AGREEMENT WILL NOT BE CONCLUDED. OR, IF CONCLUDED, WILL NOT BE RATIFIED BY SENATE." IF ANY OF THESE CALAMITIES SHOULD OCCUR, YOST SAID, "HAZARDS AND COSTS OF PRESENT ARMS RACE WOULD BE COMPOUNDED SEVERAL TIMES WITHOUT EITHER SIDE BEING RENDERED ONE WHIT MORE

SECURE. INDEED, FEARS ENGENDERED BY THIS ACCELERATED COMPETITION WOULD MAKE BOTH MORE INSECURE. HOW CAN THESE REAL PRESENT DANGERS BE BEST AVERTED OR DIMINISHED? BY CONCLUDING AND RATIFYING SOBER, VERIFIABLE, EVENLY BALANCED SALT TWO AGREEMENT, AND BY PROCEEDING PROMPTLY THEREAFTER TO NEGOTIATE SALT THREE PROVIDING FOR SUBSTANTIAL REDUCTIONS IN ARSENAL OF BOTH SIDES. SUCH AGREEMENTS DO NOT REQUIRE THAT WE "TRUST" SOVIETS, ANY MORE
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THAN THAT THEY TRUST US. IT IS IN VITAL INTEREST OF BOTH NATIONS THAT AGREEMENTS BE CONCLUDED, THAT THEY BE OBSERVED, AND THAT THEY ARE UNMISTAKABLY SEEN TO BE OBSERVED." CHRISTOPHER

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